

Tweens Drop the Remote to Get Active

Nearly every child has heard the phrase “Turn off the TV.” But watching television is often the easiest way for American children (and adults) to deal with boredom. Well, times have changed, and it’s time for children to beat the doldrums by taking part in one of the latest crazes to sweep the nation. It’s called “VERB.™ It’s what you do.”

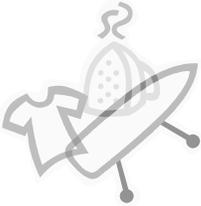
Developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), VERB is a cool new movement that encourages children between the ages of 9 and 13, commonly referred to as “tweens,” to get involved in positive, fun activities with their peers. The movement gives the word VERB a whole new meaning by offering tweens a variety of exciting choices to get active whenever, wherever, and with whomever they want. And for tweens who find their daily activities boring, VERB gives them the opportunity to try new activities they might not have thought of before.

By taking part in VERB, tweens are better able to meet the demands of daily physical activity, and they experience greater self-esteem, more confidence, and an enhanced sense of well-being. Experts recommend that tweens participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity each day.

The following chart illustrates how easy it is for tweens to turn unexciting activities into fun, positive activities. It is a great start for tweens to identify their favorite VERBs.

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VERB BOREDOM BUSTERS

What's boring ...	How I can make it fun ...
Watching TV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ACT out a favorite commercial with friends. ✓ CREATE a comedy show and ask friends to help. WRITE some jokes. ✓ Ask parents to help make a music video to showcase SINGING and DANCING talents. 
Putting up with bad weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ WRITE a story and DRAW fun illustrations with a parent. ✓ CREATE a scrapbook of favorite activities and events and have friends make captions for the photos. ✓ PRACTICE playing a musical instrument. ✓ PLAY hide- and- seek with a sibling. 
Sitting around the house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Host an indoor Olympics. Events could include cereal-on-a-spoon races, miniature GOLF, HULA-HOOP contests, and three-legged races. ✓ Invite friends to come over and PLAY family board games. ✓ BUILD a bridge or tower out of Popsicle sticks held together by marshmallows. ✓ VOLUNTEER at the local community center. Other possible volunteer opportunities include the local animal shelter, senior centers, and the library. 
Finishing chores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ INVENT hip-hop dance moves to music while making the bed or washing the dishes. ✓ Make outdoor chores fun by DESIGNING an obstacle course in the yard. Events could include a wheelbarrow race and leaf toss. ✓ Help parents COOK a healthy meal. 
Running errands with Mom/Dad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ask to EXPLORE local art. Discuss the elements of design you see in billboards, public murals, and framed prints. ✓ MAKE to-do lists of things that have to get done. ✓ Suggest to Mom and Dad taking a WALK or BIKE RIDE to the store. 